



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE USE OF OUTLINES AND OTHER DEVICES IN THE TEACHING OF FRENCH GRAMMAR

By LOUIS H. LIMPER

AT THIS time when oral French is receiving so much attention, and when the direct method has received in this country a greater stimulus than ever before, the subject of this paper may seem untimely. "Cela sent son dix-neuvième siècle" may be the verdict of those who read the title only. Yet what teacher of modern languages, be his method ever so direct, does not at times make use of paradigms or outlines? How long would it take to learn inductively all the forms of only one verb, or of the possessive adjective or pronoun? But if the conjugation is the logical way of learning the various verb forms, and the paradigm the best way of mastering the possessives, why not use similar methods for presenting other grammatical material?

The outline is the most logical, concise and comprehensible method of presenting a series of related facts or rules. It is the greatest aid to visualization. As such the grammar outline should find its place in language teaching. The great majority of our modern language students are of an age to be able to reason fairly well at least. In fact they want to know the reason for things. That which is logical, or at least logically arranged, appeals to them more and is therefore more easily learned than that which appears to be illogical. Now grammar is for the greater part, at least, logical and therefore, after all, it is an aid and not a drawback to a student in the acquisition of a language. The direct method is based upon the claim that the best way to learn is by observing, drawing conclusions and then applying these conclusions. But the retention of a goodly share of the multitudinous facts learned by observation is possible only when these facts are logically arranged in the mind, unless, of course, one is able to pick up a language by hearing it spoken for several years. Herein lies the "raison d'être" of the paradigm and of the conjugation and of outlines of other grammar material.

Most of our grammars content themselves with summing up the facts that were to be learned inductively from the reading lesson in a series of numbered statements or rules, which are the bane of the student and which, if learned at all, are soon forgotten. As will be seen later, much of the material of grammar lends itself admirably to outline form, and when it is put in this form the student finds it much easier to remember. It would be unwise to put such outlines in a direct method text book, for, inasmuch as they appeal to the eye, the students would often study the outline before carefully preparing the reading lesson. The time to work out the outline is after the reading lesson and the questions and answers based on it have been gone over but before the sentences from English to French are taken up. The text book frequently has several lessons based on the same grammatical subject. Where this is the case the making of an outline serves as an excellent résumé of the whole subject. Students can hardly be expected to fill out these outlines unguided, but after the form has been suggested or given by the teacher, the filling out may well be left to the student.

The preceding paragraphs have referred to teaching according to the direct method, and it has been pointed out that for the purpose of review the outline form is the best way of summing up the facts and rules to be remembered. In college classes, particularly if they are large and meet only three or four times a week, time is lacking for following out the direct method persistently. Many points of grammar must be accepted *a priori*, and as the students are of maturer minds, they are willing to accept them thus. In fact, to many college students the direct method often seems slow and tedious, frequently even childish. They want solid food dished out to them in concise, clear and logical form. They will attend to the digestion outside the class room. But whether this is true of most mature students or not, the fact remains that, because of the lack of time, much of the grammar must be learned this way. To meet this situation, therefore, the outline or some happy device is the logical way of presenting the grammatical material.

It is surprising to note how many grammar rules, frequently covering several pages in a text, can be put together in a short and interesting outline form, which can be learned in but a few moments.

Examine for a moment the following way of presenting the subject of the four forms of the definite article and the way they contract or do not contract with the prepositions *de* and *à*.

	<i>the</i>	<i>of the, some</i>	<i>to the</i>
masc. sing. before cons. or aspirated h.	le	du	au
fem. sing. before cons. or aspirated h.	la	de la	à la
masc. or fem. sing. before vowel or mute h.	l'	de l'	à l'
Plural in all cases.	les	des	aux

No originality is claimed for this method of arrangement, though very few grammars sum up the subject in any similar way. How much quicker and more satisfactory to refer to an outline of this sort for the correct form, than to search through two or three lessons of the grammar!

When a student is in doubt about the relative position of two personal pronoun objects, he generally cannot rely on his ear for he has not had enough practice. The text book probably has this subject spread over several lessons and the rules tucked away in some inconspicuous place. If the student who has forgotten which comes first, "le" or "lui," can go to a table like the following, which is also found in a very few grammars, he can save himself a great amount of time.

	me			
	te	le		
Subject (ne)	se	la	lui	y en verb or aux. (pas)
	nous	les	leur	
	vous			

The following method of teaching statements of comparison appeals to the eye and will therefore aid the student in remembering. A text book might well use pictures for illustration, or the teacher with artistic ability might use his skill on the blackboard.

A est plus grand que B
 A est aussi grand que B
 A est moins grand que B

mon argent votre argent
 J'ai plus d'argent que vous.
 J'ai autant d'argent que vous.
 J'ai moins d'argent que vous.

The demonstrative-pronoun is quite perplexing to most students. A summing up like the following often clears up matters.

	celui		
variable	celle		ci
	ceux	must be followed by	là
	celles	<i>one</i> of these	de
invariable	*ce		relative pronoun

*ce meaning "it" is an exception.

The various forms of the interrogative pronoun may be arranged as follows:

		Short form	Long form	Form meaning "which one?"
1. Subject	person	qui?	qui est-ce qui?	lequel?
	thing	qu'est-ce qui?	"
	idea	" " " "
2. Object	person	qui?	qui est-ce que?	lequel
	thing	que?	qu'est-ce que?	"
	idea	"	" " " "
3. Obj. of prep.	person	qui?	qui est-ce que?	lequel?
	thing	quoi?	quoi est-ce que?	"
	idea	"	" " " "

Similarly the relative pronoun.

		When the antecedent is the last mentioned noun or pronoun	When the antecedent is not the last mentioned noun or pronoun
1. Subject	person	qui	lequel
	thing	"	"
	idea	"
2. Object	person	que	lequel
	thing	"	"
	idea	"
3. Obj. of prep.	person	qui, lequel, (dont)	lequel
	thing	... " , dont	"
	idea	quoi	

Because of their similarity to the English construction many grammars make no particular mention of conditional sentences. The change of mode and tense in the clauses, however, causes the student some trouble which only much practice will overcome. A glance at the following outline will tell him just which mode and tense to use.

1. Simple—Use the regular tense in French corresponding to the tense used in English, except that the English future in an “if” clause must be replaced by the French present.

2. Unreal or contrary to fact	{	present time	{	“if” clause—imperfect indicative
				main clause—present conditional
	{	past time	“if” clause —	{ pluperfect indicative or pluperfect subjunctive
			main clause—	{ perfect conditional or pluperfect subjunctive

Calling the attention of students to contrast or to similarity helps them to remember. Hence the usefulness of statements like the following:

In English all prepositions except “to” are followed by the form in *-ing*.

In French all prepositions except “en” are followed by the infinitive.

How much? or how many? = *combien de?*

How much! or how many! = *que de!*

How? = *comment?* How! = *que!*

Teachers with ingenuity will, no doubt, think of many more outlines and devices. These have been offered merely to give examples of what can be done and are by no means exhaustive.

Kansas State Agricultural College